



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

Director of Children and Family Services

At its meeting held November 15, 2005, the Board took the following action:

36-A

Supervisor Molina made the following statement:

“For a number of years, the Children’s Services’ Office of the Inspector General position has remained vacant. During this time, the timeliness of Inspector General’s (OIG) investigative reports, as well as with the role that the Office of the Inspector General plays in strengthening the Department of Children and Family Services’ (DCFS) internal auditing function, has been of concern.

“It remains imperative that an independent review be conducted of every child death, or incident of serious injury, that occurs in connection with our County’s foster care program. The results of such reviews must be provided to the Board and the Director of Children and Family Services in a timely fashion.

“This is why on July 12, 2005, the Board directed the DCFS to prepare an implementation plan to replicate the Office of Independent Review (OIR) model. That model has been successfully utilized by the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD) and would strengthen the integrity of DCFS internal investigations of child death or serious injury while providing the Board and the Director of DCFS with timely recommendations for organizational policy and practice changes.

“In its report dated August 11, 2005, DCFS informed the Board that it is currently in the process of developing the financial and fiscal impact of implementation, working with the Office of County Counsel to address any related confidentiality issues that may result from OIR’s oversight responsibilities, negotiating with the Office of County Counsel and the Chief Administrative Office regarding the process of contracting with OIR. DCFS also reported that it would be necessary to expand the staffing capacity and resources of the current OIR to ensure overall effectiveness in performing the aforementioned new oversight responsibilities.

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“DCFS has set aside in its budget the amount of \$226,000 for services to be provided by the OIG position in the Department of the Auditor-Controller. However, given the recent death of two-year-old Sarah C. in foster care, it is imperative that the County immediately take steps to improve the safety of foster youth.”

Yvonne Michelle Autry, Warren Williams and Corri Planck, addressed the Board.

After discussion, on motion of Supervisor Molina, seconded by Supervisor Knabe, unanimously carried, the Director of Children and Family Services was instructed to:

1. Redirect the budgeted amount of \$226,000 to contract for the Department of Children and Family Services-Office of Independent Review (DCFS-OIR);
2. Report back to the Board in 30 days regarding proposed contract(s) for DCFS-OIR in the 2005-2006 Fiscal Year and include in the report, timelines, deliverables and protocol for handling of child deaths and critical incidents; and
3. Immediately direct the DCFS-OIR to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of Sarah C. and provide a status report to the Board within 30 days.

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Each Supervisor
Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Director, Children's Planning Council